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ABSTRACT

The paper summarizes findings of a study of Mexican poverty (SO 010 522), and relates these findings to guidelines of the World Population Plan of Action. The study indicated that poverty in Mexico is based upon national and international economic, political, and social factors. Included among these factors are exploitation of labor, rapid population growth, a markedly differentiated class system, income inequalities, concentration of land ownership and economic productivity in the hands of a few, unequal patterns of food distribution, heavy foreign investment, and production for export at the expense of the national market. These factors are considered in light of the following ten recommendations of the World Population Plan of Action: (1) living conditions should be improved; (2) national and international politics should be based on considerations other than power; (3) environmental impact of socioeconomic development should be considered; (4) morbidity and mortality rates should be reduced; (5) fertility rates should be moderated; (6) employment opportunities should be created for the unemployed and the underemployed; (7) new technology should not be encouraged if it will benefit only the few that control it; (8) balanced consumption should be encouraged between rural and urban areas; (9) governments of developing nations should consider social justice in addition to short term economic gains; (10) training in population dynamics should deal with economic, social, and political influences. The conclusion is that Mexico can improve the condition of its economy by creating institutions which favor human development instead of the exploitation of the masses by the few. (Author/DB)

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SOME THOUGHTS ON MEXICAN POVERTY VIEWED FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE WORLD POPULATION PLAN OF ACTION

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SOME THOUGHTS ON MEXICAN POVERTY VIEWED FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE WORLD POPULATION PLAN OF ACTION

This paper is an effort to bring together the results of a study of Mexican poverty and some salient points in the World Population Plan of Action. Such an effort will require first a brief summing-up of the basic concerns and findings of the poverty study, and then a consideration of their implications in the light of some of the basic guidelines of the said Plan.

My study of Poverty in Mexico is titled Scarcity, Exploitation, and Poverty: Theory, Historically Specific Research, and Criticism, and will appear in print during the coming year (1978). Limitations of time and space, and the fact that the remarks I will be making here have received full documentation in the above mentioned work make it unnecessary for me to repeat that documentation here.

The study's focus on poverty was at once an effort to come to terms with the basic question which gave rise to sociological theory, and an effort to overcome its tendency to reduce sociological standpoints within the limits of class conditioned ideologies.

The basic question out of which sociology arose in the West was "the social question:" how to explain poverty and misery in human society, particularly growing poverty amidst an ever increasing capacity to produce wealth. The answers given to this question tended to be of two types: those who viewed poverty as rooted in human nature, and those who saw the roots of poverty in institutions which are ill-suited to man's nature, and which prevent normal development. My study's focus on "scarcity" and "exploitation" was an effort to get at the core of both standpoints. On the one hand Malthus and the Malthusian viewed population growth (with some

revisions) as the source of "scarcity," and scarcity as the source of poverty. On the other hand Marx and the Marxian school saw exploitation as institutionalized in private property over the means of production and poverty as having its source in that exploitation. My study of Mexican poverty was an effort to find out whether or not data gathered under the guidance of concepts taken from those politically opposing standpoints, would provide evidence for weighing the relative explanatory power of those standpoints.

Mexico was selected for study because Mexico was known to have one of the fastest rates of population growth in the World, and one of the most markedly differentiated class systems. Later research showed that Mexico exceeded India in population growth rates and in the extent of income inequality.

Close study of both theoretical standpoints led to a sharp focus on eleven questions, the first of which seeks to establish the extent to which poverty might be said to exist in Mexico. The questions are: What portion of the Mexican population lives at or below the margins of subsistence? What is the balance of forces between population needs and means of subsistence? What are the respective rates of growth of reproductive and productive forces, past, present, and predicted, and why? What specific form does private property over the means of production take in Mexico? What portion of the Mexican population is unemployed or underemployed and why? What are the trends in unemployment and underemployment, past, present, and predicted? What are the trends in land and capital concentration in Mexico? What are the trends in income derived from profits and rents? What relationship is there between

the latter trends and the incidence of business cycles? What relationship is there between business cycles and the size of the unemployed labor force? What is the relationship between the unemployed labor force and the population living below the level of subsistence? The conclusions arrived at under each of these questions are as follows.

Portion of the Mexican Population Living at or Below Subsistence Levels. The answer to this question depends on whether one is concerned with bare biological subsistence, or with life-style subsistence. The assumption I make here is that subsistence of both types varies over a range, and that there is a segment of the population where the two forms overlap. An estimate of 50 percent of the population living at or below subsistence would err on the safe side, based on 1970 figures. The actual figure is probably closer to 60, particularly in recent years.

Balance of Forces Between Population Needs and the Means of Subsistence. The magnitude of the hungry and undernourished population in Mexico is far out of proportion to the actual shortages reported. Ana Maria Florez reported 15 percent of Mexico's population as being hungry in or around 1961. Yet, the average daily supply of calories available per capita in 1960-62 exceeded both the 1967 and 1974 minimum standards set by the FAO, while the amount of proteins per capita available during those same years (proteins from all sources) fell short of the 1967 FAO standards by only three grams. Roughly the same pattern prevailed in 1967, with a total shortage of proteins of only 1 gram. Aside from relatively small shortages of vitamins A, C, and riboflavin,

the 1967 figures show a plentiful supply of vitamins and minerals per capita.

Estimates of the extent of malnutrition in Mexico vary from 80 percent in 1960 to 50 percent in 1970. Two possible sources of these discrepancies suggest themselves: the unequal pattern of internal distribution, and the practice of production for export. The Federal District consumes twice as much meat per capita as the rest of the country. Also, annual exports include cattle on the hoof by the hundreds of thousands, and tens of millions of kilograms of processed meat. The list of exports also includes heavy amounts of dairy products, sea food. eggs, fruits, vegetables, etc.

Close to two-thirds of Mexico's population was reported to be lacking in medical attention from either private or public sources in 1970. About a fourth of Mexico's population was still illiterate in 1970, and three fifths of the economically active population had less than three years of education. In 1970, two fifths of Mexico's housing units were one-room, adobe and mud structures, with dirt floors, and lacking in electricity and plumbing. About three in five houses lacked sewers and drainage, and nearly half of Mexico's housing units were renter occupied.

Relative Growth Rates of Population Needs and of the Means of Subsistence. The relationship between population needs and the means of subsistence is not an immediate, one-to-one relation but, rather, it is mediated by the whole body of institutionalized practices, ideological assumptions, and geo-political concerns which play a role in formulating the policies of the administration in power.

Among the mediating factors between population growth and means of subsistence during the Díaz administration were the following.

A policy of promoting industrialization through heavy reliance on foreign investments and on the sale of export crops abroad to provide a source of foreign exchange. Foreign interests controlled 42 percent of the country's wealth. Seventy-five percent of the railroads, 64 percent of the minerals, and 58 percent of the petroleum was owned by foreign interests. Over 51 percent of total investments in 1902-1903 came from abroad. Mexico was ruled by a coalition of domestic and foreign elites whose gospel of "positivist freedom" was the freedom to self-enrichment. The "Surveying Laws" were instrumental in dispossessing the Mexican peasantry, in promoting the growth of large landed estates, and in encouraging the growth of export crops.

The relation of population growth to growth in the means of subsistence during ~~during~~ the past century of Mexican history forces a reconsideration of common sense assumptions which assume a simple, inverse, relationship between those two variables. Relatively low rates of population growth during the Díaz administration were accompanied by declining rates of growth in food production, and by wage increases which lagged far behind prices. However, while total crop production was growing at a rate less than half as fast as the rate of population growth, the production of export crops was growing at a rate four times faster than the rate of population growth.

The years between 1940 and 1970 were years of recovery and of industrial development for the Mexican economy. These changes followed a long interval of revolution, depression, and reform. Between 1940 and 1970 Mexico maintained a rate of growth in food production better than twice faster than the average rate of population increase, despite the fact that the latter figure had nearly doubled in magnitude

since the earlier interval. The growth of crop production for export continued at a high rate: better than three times faster than the average rate of population increase. Mexico's experience during the years 1940-1970 indicate that food production can increase from two to three times faster than its population, even when such population is doubling during the same interval. Changes of a political, legal, and technological nature have all tended to foster these increases, despite the relative barreness of the soil and climate.

Even if it were possible to show that some of Mexico's hunger and malnutrition has its source in diminishing returns on added units of capital investment, the question would still remain as to how it happens that the increases which do take place are distributed unequally.

There will be a doubling of the hungry and undernourished population by the middle 90's, if patterns of population growth and of food production and distribution prevailing in 1970-1975 continue to hold. Mexico faces compound and growing problems in meeting the health, housing and educational needs of its population.

Specific Form Which Private Property Over the Means of Production Takes in Mexico. The main thrust of the constitutional reforms of 1917 was directed at a rejection of a laissez faire economic system. This was achieved through recognition of the right of the state to give private property the modalities dictated by the public interest. The conception of property as concrete social function was not worked out in full, despite language which at times is radical. A number of reforms were carried out under the provisions of this law; land reform, nationalization of petroleum, railways, and some utilities. Mexicanization of some private enterprises, amortization of the for-

eign debt, and reduction of foreign investments. The administration of Avila Camacho initiated a reversal of the latter trend.

Portion of the Mexican Population Unemployed or Underemployed, and Why? Official figures on unemployment in Mexico are scanty, implausible, and incongruously low: 1.0 percent in 1970. Inclusion of the contingent of northward migrants alone would require a sharp upward revision: up to 7.5 times higher than the official figure for 1950. The "revolution" has tended to institutionalize underemployment, marginality, low productivity, and poverty. The underemployed include cultivators of infra-subsistence ejidal or private land holdings, migratory field hands, and the many types of hustlers in commerce, the services, and manufacturing. Recent estimates of the size of the unemployed and underemployed population place this figure at 19 to 40 and even 50 percent.

Trends in Underemployment and Unemployment: Past, Present, and Predicted. It is pointless to attempt to assess trends on the basis of the scanty data available: 17.6 percent in 1950 and 18.2 percent in 1960.

It is possible to show that claims as to the size of the annual contingent of new job seekers contributed by population growth alone -- 300,000 per year during the '50's, and 800,000 per year during the '70's -- are exaggerated. The 300,000 figure for the '50's is roughly equivalent to the number of 15 year olds in 1950. The death rate removed roughly 100,000 males aged 15 to 65 during that year. Approximately 50,000 males reached retirement age. Close to 100,000 jobs were eliminated every year during the '50's as a result of increases in the efficiency of production in industry, in agriculture, and in commerce and the services. Thus, for every three jobs made neces-

sary by population growth, two jobs were eliminated by increases in productivity.

The process of urbanization under capitalist forms of control is a process which creates unemployment and underemployment faster than it creates employment. Under capitalism, the economy of action made possible by the application of science and technology to the productive process is transformed into a process of displacement and attrition of jobs and salaries.

Trends in Land and Capital Concentration. Despite its reforms, Mexico remains a country where most of the land, wealth, and income are controlled by a few persons and corporations.

The authenticity of both, the program of land reform, and of public committment to the body of law underlying those reforms have been questioned. Most of the best farming and grazing lands are still concentrated in a few hands, and the ejidal program seems to have been most successful in creating infra-subsistence farming units. In manufacturing, one and a half percent of the total number of establishments in 1965 accounted for 77 percent of the total product. In commerce and services the situation in 1965 was the following.

	Percent of Establishments Which Control	Percent of Total Capital Controlled	Percent of Total Gross Income Controlled
Commerce	1.3	60	60.4
Services	1	64	54

In 1962, half of the income of the 2,000 largest enterprises accrued to the 100 largest corporations. Also, about 42 percent of the total income of the 2,000 largest corporations accrued to corporations under foreign control or to corporations which showed strong foreign participation. The latter figures suggest that cyclical fluctuations in the

Mexican economy are heavily conditioned by international economic fluctuations, and that these influences are magnified by similar trends in the movement of the Mexican economy.

The process of urbanization under capitalist forms of development is essentially a process of capital concentration: there is 320 percent more production per inhabitant in the Federal District than in the rest of the country. Within its institutions of private credit, the Federal District also shows extreme concentration in resources per inhabitant, in capital reserves, and in visible cash deposits. Seventeen percent of the nation's population lived in the Federal District in 1970.

Trends in Income Derived from Profits and Rents. Data on profits in any form tend to be scanty and fragmentary.

Profits taken as a percent of annual income show a steady rise from 26.2 percent in 1939 to 45.1 percent in 1946. This was followed by erratic fluctuations around 41 percent between 1951 and 1955, and by a steady decline to 36.5 percent by 1959. During the same interval, commercial profits varied from 53 percent of total profits in 1939 to 61 percent of total profits in 1950. Also, incomes from rents and interests declined from about 8 percent of total income in 1939 to about 6.4 percent in 1954.

Between 1939 and 1960, incomes from capital ranged from a third to one half of total annual income, while incomes from labor ranged between slightly over a fifth and just over a third of total income. Of special interest is the steady decline in mixed incomes, and in incomes imputed to the self-employed throughout the interval.

The rate of profit typical to Mexico has been estimated at 20 to 25 percent though rates as high as 30 percent are reported not bo be un-

usual. In fact, recent rates are reported to have been averaging 30 percent.

Marx defines the rate of profit as a percentage ratio of surplus value to total capital, i.e., capital which includes both its fixed and variable components. The best data available for the purpose of assessing trends exists only in the form of a ratio of surplus value to fixed capital, and for the interval 1950-1967. To stress the incompleteness of the data, it will be referred to as "the ratio of profit."

Running averages worked out for three year intervals on the basis of these data, show a fairly steady decline in this ratio, from a high of .30 in the early Fifties to a low of .24 at the end of the decade. At the turn of the Sixties there was a slight increase from .24 to .25, which was sustained for four years, and which was followed by a decline to .2[illegible] by the end of the interval covered by the data.

Indications are that the rate of return on foreign investments tend to be lower than the rate of return on investments from native sources.

Relationship Between the Trend of Profits and the Incidence of Business Cycles. Trend data for the profit ratio and for net investments yielded higher, positive, coefficients of correlation with one another than did raw data. The former averaged +.70 for two different estimates of net investments. The latter averaged +.37. Also, the profit ratio and the productivity index yielded a -.71 correlation coefficient for the years 1950-1958. Hence as the profit ratio fell net investments tended to fall also, while productivity tended to rise. Moreover, during an interval when productivity nearly doubled (1940-1960) real wages declined by about 10 percent.

During the years 1951-1964, as the profit ratio fell, GNP growth

rates tended to stagnate at about 6.3 percent per year. Very high correlation coefficients were found to exist between rising absolute levels of national production and absolute levels of both, public and private investments. The former yielded a remarkable +.98 "r" coefficient, the latter +.81.

The ratio of profits invested to profits received tends to be rather low and inflexible: approximately .20. Thus only about a fifth of the profits received are reinvested. The years of high net investments tended to be years of high income shares obtained through profits rather than years of increasing ratios of profits to investment. An average "r" coefficient of approximately +.85 was found between the percentage of annual income appropriated in the form of profits and two different estimates of net investments. The correlation between percentages of total profits invested and net investment levels tended to be low: an average +.22 for two estimates of net investments. Practically, no correlation was found to exist between the ratio of investments to profits and the percentage share of annual income paid through profits; a weak -.12.

These findings suggest that the relatively constant GNP growth rates in 1951-1964 are more likely to have been sustained by increases in the productivity of labor, in both, its accumulated and living forms, than by changes in the investment-profit ratio.

A very high -.93 coefficient of correlation was found to exist between trend data on Mexico's predominantly negative balance of trade and the profit ratio. Raw data yielded a lower but still high -.79 "r" coefficient. Hence the profit ratio tends to decrease as the negative trade balance increases.

Relation Between Business Cycles and the Size of the Unemployed Labor Force. Unemployment data are scanty, fragmentary, and dubious in nature. Thus it is not possible to deal fruitfully with this question.

Relation Between the Unemployed Labor Force and the Population Living Below the Level of Subsistence. Both unemployment and underemployment must be considered by any meaningful effort to deal with this question.

A cautious estimate of the relative size of the unemployed and underemployed population in 1970 Mexico is 20 percent. That is, while the ratio of the poor to the total population is 1 in 2, the ratio of the unemployed and underemployed to the poor population is 2 to 5. Had these rates held, the total contingent of the unemployed and underemployed in 1974 would have been 10.8 million people, 27 million people would have qualified as poor. However, there are indications that there has been a serious increase in unemployment, underemployment, and poverty in the '70's.

The chief distinguishing features between the unemployed and underemployed on the one hand, and the remaining poor population on the other are the following. The former consist of those whose share of annual income is about 5 percent (and declining), and who make up the hard-core of Mexico's hunger, of its severe malnutrition, and of most of the illiteracy problem; their medical neglect must be regarded as being almost total, while their housing conditions are infra-human. The latter consists of those whose share of annual income is about 12 percent (and declining also), and whose diets are more likely to assuage hunger than to provide a balanced diet; they tend to attend school less than three years, or to be illiterate;

their medical attention tends to be confined to the purchase of drugs across the counter, and their living quarters include more than their share of rented one-room shacks, with dirt floors, devoid of the most elementary sanitary facilities.

The sum of Mexico's unemployed, underemployed, and employed poor make up the bulk of Mexico's population which lives in misery and hopelessness. The burden of the established institutions and the dead weight of the ages is on their backs. It is to them that the world of class exploitation and the lie of the ages preach that they have no one but themselves to blame for their poverty. Their eyes are veiled by the search for individual salvation, a search which assures them that the more things change, the more they remain the same.

This study of Mexican poverty leads to the conclusion that data gathered under the guidance of concepts taken from ideologically opposing theories of poverty are not neutral on the question as to the relative explanatory power of those theories, and that it is possible to arrive at knowledge concerning ideologically sensitive issues despite the tendency of ideology to influence perception.

We now turn to a consideration of Mexican poverty from the perspective of the World Population Plan of Action with a view to relating some of the background ideas, principles, objectives, and recommendations of the Plan to the specific conditions of Mexican Society.

Need to Improve Living Conditions of the Underprivileged (Article B. k.). There can be no question that any program which would pretend to solve Mexico's problems of development and of population growth without considering necessary changes of a social, economic, and political nature which are aimed at significantly improving the life conditions of the poor is doomed to failure from the start. However, the language of the

Plan, in this connection, leaves much to be desired: it implies that a system of distribution of the world's goods which is based not on work, but on privilege, is not itself the problem, and that what needs to be done instead is to bring the poor within the structure of privilege.

An economy such as the Mexican economy, where the poor have so little and the privileged few have so much, can not provide the kind of mass market which is needed to promote the development of a mass industry. Instead, it encourages the growth of an import market for luxuries, and the channeling of resources into conspicuous consumption for the few who can afford to flaunt the symbols of wealth. On the other hand, family income and levels of education are known to be negatively correlated to family size.

The study of population problems can not be reduced to the analysis of population trends: intra-national and international inequities must also be considered (Article A. 4.). Both, Mexico's achievements and its problems have intra-national and inter-national dimensions. The effort to uplift the living standards of Mexico's impoverished masses must overcome a manifold of compound and interrelated obstacles in the way of accelerated economic development: the inertia of exploitative institutions which make for declining real wages in the face of rapidly increasing productivity, and which make for highly unequal patterns of distribution of wealth and income, the inertia of neo-colonial forms of power politics which work toward frustrating internal efforts to establish equity and justice, the inertia of class conditioned forms of thought which find it easier to identify an enemy than to think about fundamental issues, the demographic inertia which makes for growing populations even after replacement growth rates are reached, and,

finally, lurking behind all of these obstacles, the ever growing possibility of eco-catastrophe.

Economic development in Mexico would be encouraged by upping gross investments to 30 percent of its GNP per year; by changing wealth and income distribution patterns so as to promote the development of a mass industry responsive to a mass market; by discouraging dependance on costly import items, particularly those which appeal to luxury consumption; by improving nutritional, health, and housing standards of its population; by doubling, trebling and even quadrupling its rate of investment in education; and by continuing to work toward reducing its rapid population growth rates toward replacement levels. What this means is that both capitalist exploitation and unplanned parenthood must be relegated to the museums of pre-history.

Population policies are constituent elements of socio-economic development policies, never substitutes for them (Article B. d.). Under conditions such as existed during the Diaz regime even a rate of population growth of 1.1 percent per year would appear to be over-rapid. Such conditions included: declining rates in food production, rapidly expanding production of export crops, soaring food prices, lagging salaries, increasing concentration of capital in land, industry, and in commerce, and heavy reliance on foreign investments accompanied by heavy concentration of wealth in foreign hands. Due to somewhat changed conditions following the 1910 Revolution and the Reforms of the Thirties, the average rate of population growth (2.5 percent per year) in recent decades--speaking relatively--is not quite so rapid, since Mexico's growing capacity to feed itself rapidly outpaced population growth rates. However, both population policy and socio-economic policy must ultimately be judged sound or unsound in terms of their ultimate

impact on the natural habitat. It is only a naive exercise in anthropocentric blindness which permits us to focus attention on ways and means to overcome human poverty in either, or both, of those terms, without becoming sensitive to the growing pauperization of the natural habitat which results from the combined impact of all such factors.

The reduction of morbidity and mortality to the maximum possible extent should be achieved in conjunction with massive social and economic development (Article C. b. 20). The reduction of human morbidity and mortality has been one of the deepest human aspirations from time immemorial. The human capacity for consciousness and the relative continuity of consciousness through generations is saddened by the relative transitoriness of life. Death, in particular premature death, leaves us with a sense of the tragic. Our most human motives rebel against the waste of human life, and it is only natural that they should do so. Yet, if we consider the problems which will be created by a doubling of the hungry and undernourished population by the middle Nineties, a doubling which will take place if existing patterns of population growth and of wealth and income distribution continue as before; if we consider the added environmental stress which will be applied on forests and grazing lands, on soil fertility, on the water table, on the purity of air, water, and soil, on the shrinking supply of non-renewable resources, by an additional 50 million, 100 million, or even 150 million additional inhabitants in this sunny and colorful land called Mexico, we can not but conclude that only a government systematically committed to the idea that property is not an abstract right of a possessor over a thing, but a concrete socio-political function which is vital to the life of action, and which is free from neo-colonial interference, will be able to cope with the most momentous crisis heretofore faced by man: the crisis of man in the biosphere.

The moderation of fertility levels through the promotion of social justice, social mobility and social development. Neither the cry for social justice, nor the plea for social mobility, nor the call for social development, nor the advocacy of planned parenthood go to the heart of the problem. In particular, the plea for increased mobility tends to be a plea for more of the same when uttered within the context of institutionalized class antagonisms. The cry for social justice is a cry for an end to the misappropriation of wealth by exploitative systems of wealth distribution, and its implications are far-reaching, but it does not go far enough. The cry for planned parenthood is a cry to bring under rational control the human capacity to create needs, particularly at a time when human beings have come to see the possibility of higher living standards and have also come to expect the realization of those standards. But this cry does not go far enough either. The call for social development is one sided to the extent that we continue to view human society as the independent variable and nature as the dependent one: to the extent that we continue to act on the view that nature is there to be exploited by human beings. What is at issue is the permanency of human life on the planet. Nothing short of full justice will do: the creation and maintenance of social institutions which foster the development of healthy, alert, educated, productive, loving human beings in a healthy and unpolluted habitat which is in harmony with the creative powers of nature. Justice requires an end to the exploitation of man by man; it requires that no human being shall go hungry where there is food to be eaten; it requires that no human being shall go uneducated when there is knowledge to be had; it requires that no human being shall go jobless when there is work to be done; it requires that no child shall be brought forth unwanted, unloved, uncared for.

Justice requires the development of political and legal institutions which are committed to the fullest possible development of both human and natural creative capacities, and the development of each in harmony with the other. We must work toward the development of social institutions which teach us to love the planet and its life support system more than our mothers, civilization more than our fathers, and human-kind more than capital.

Countries which are concerned with the outflow of migrant workers... should make particular efforts to create favorable employment opportunities at the national level (Article C. e. 54.) The Mexican government has recently given public recognition to the fact that its outmigration problem is part and parcel of its unemployment problem. It is less well known that the number of so-called "wetbacks" apprehended across the Rio Grande correlates highly, and negatively (-.84), with the index of real income per inhabitant. Mexico needs to have frequent, accurate, and realistic readings of its unemployment and underemployment problem. They should include a consideration of the outmigration problem, and efforts should be made to relate the unemployment problem to trends in wealth and income distribution both at home and abroad. Such trends can not but condition the Mexican economy's capacity to create employment for its people.

Decisions on the introduction of technologies affording significant savings in employment of manpower should take into account the relative abundance of human resources (Article C. f. 2. 69.). The problems here are compounded by a number of factors: neo-colonial dependence which sets definite limits to the technology which can be introduced, patterns of wealth and income distribution which condition whether the new technology will benefit the population as a whole, or only the few that control it, and existing usages, such as the ejido and minifundio

patterns of land tenure, which heavily restrict the type of labor-saving technology which can be applied. It is not labor-saving, or effort-saving technology which is the problem. To the extent that savings in employment mean that the displaced population will become marginal to the production process, it is employment-saving technology rather than labor-saving technology that is the problem. Also, as regards labor saving technology in agriculture, the typically small size of ejical and minifundio holdings preclude the possibility of using the most efficient technology. The old idea of haciendas without hacendados has yet to be tried in Mexico.

The problems of urban environment are a consequence not only of the concentration of inhabitants but also of their way of life... to avoid such effects ... a development pattern favouring balanced and rational consumption is recommended (C.1.d.50). Overconsumption and waste of resources on one side, coupled with underconsumption and lack of access to resources on the other, is not exclusively an urban phenomenon, though such disparities tend to be greatly magnified by urban settings. But overconsumption and waste are merely symptoms of a fundamental contradiction in a social system which draws its productive and creative energies from collective, concretely corporate effort but which distributes its benefits in terms of appropriation criteria which are private in character, and which are corporate only in what passes for "legal" fiction. The effort to regulate consumption and to reduce waste is not enough. Only the reconstitution of social relations along genuine and self-consistent lines will permit the development of equitable, judicious, and fairer rural and urban settings.

Government should take into account not only short-term economic returns or alternative patterns but also...social justice in the distribution of the benefits of development among all groups and regions (Article C. 1. d. 46. c.). Mexico shows serious sectoral, regional, and ethnic imbalances in wealth distribution. Most of Mexico's exports originate in rural areas, while most of her imports converge in the Federal District. Rural incomes tend to be considerably lower than urban incomes, and rural poverty is much more intense than urban poverty. Predictably, the wealthiest zones in Mexico are the Federal District and the states located on the Eastern shore of the Sea of Cortes. The poorest zones are found in the Southern states and in the North Central Mesa. Also, the indigenous population in such states as Oaxaca remains the most submerged and marginated in Mexican life. Any balanced program of development would have to redress these imbalances.

Training in population dynamics...should deal not only with population variables but also with interrelationship of these variables with economic, social and political variables. (Article C. 3. c. 83.). Such problems as those concerning the relationship between cyclical economic fluctuations and the relative size of the impoverished, unemployed, underemployed and migratory labor force need to be studied in greater detail and depth. This task can not be accomplished in the absence of trend data on such variables as the organic composition of capital, profit rates, the size of the unemployed and underemployed labor force, etc. The very serious deficiencies in the availability of such data needs to be corrected.